

Maertens  
Appl. No. 09/899,302  
February 23, 2004

— Claims PTO —

4/8/04

EWS

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-23 (Canceled).

~~1~~  
24. (Previously Presented) An isolated polynucleic acid specifically hybridizing with a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 55 to SEQ ID NO: 81, under conditions allowing discrimination of up to 1 nucleotide mismatch, or the complement thereof.

~~2~~  
25. (Previously Presented) An isolated HCV virus characterized by any of the 5' UTR nucleotide sequences selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 55 to 81.

Claims 26-27. (Canceled)